... CHARLES STRANGE ...

Viereck's New Babbitt
– Will Herberg

THE

Commonweal

WATERFRONT PRIEST

by Budd Schulberg

KARL STERN
GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN
EDWARD LITTLEJOHN

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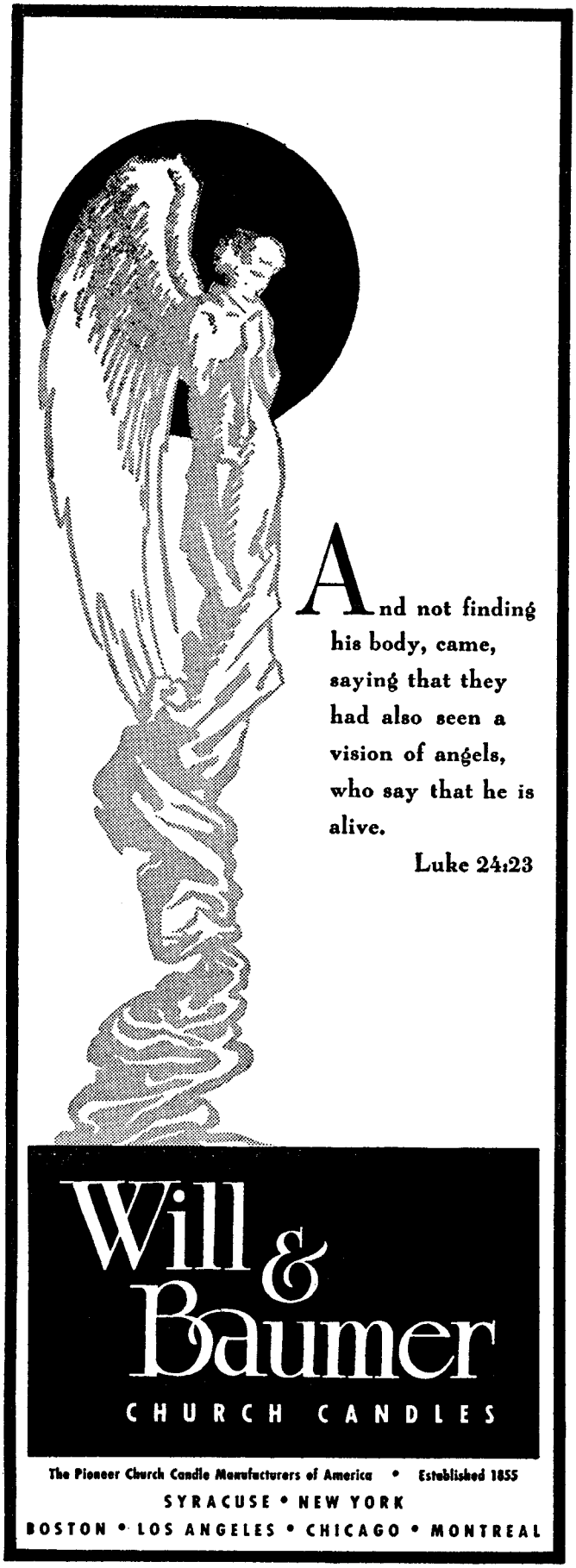
And not finding his body, came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that he is alive.
Luke 24:23
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THE Commonweal

week by week

RETURN OF A HERO

THE return of Chester Bowles from India dramatizes an old problem. What kind of anti-Communism do we in the United States want? On the one hand, there is that of the McCarthy-Jenner-Velde type, whose followers claim for it the exclusive title to being truly anti-Communist. And —although it is strange to apply such a negative label to a man who is more pro-freedom and pro-democracy than *anti-* anything—there is the type of anti-Communism exemplified by Chester Bowles.

Bowles is unmistakably a liberal, and, since this is the open season on liberals, he is fair game for any critic. But even granting that the prevailing climate of opinion is anti-liberal, can any responsible person seriously question the kind of job Bowles has done for the U.S. and the cause of freedom in India? Does anyone seriously contend that the leaders of the group now threatening the freedom of our universities would make better representatives of democracy abroad?

On Senator McCarthy's show recently, two Voice of America witnesses said that Bowles suggested they tone down the anti-Communism in Voice broadcasts to India. Their statements were sensational enough to make the headlines, but it is doubtful that the full story will ever catch up with the original shocker. What Bowles actually told the Voice of America was that a heavy emphasis by the Voice on anti-Communist statements which had been made by Indian leaders led these leaders to tone down future statements, in an effort to maintain India's "neutrality." Purely as a point of strategy, Bowles' recommendation on this matter makes sense.

More importantly, Bowles suggested that Voice programs to India be more positive in tone, more devoted to presenting democratic ideas than to beating the Communists over the head. Perhaps this was the part that bothered Senator McCarthy; in calling for a more dynamic approach to foreign policy, Bowles may have sounded too much like President Eisenhower for the Senator's peace of mind.

The assignment Bowles took on when he went to India was a tough one. India finally won its struggle for freedom only a few years ago, and it is jealous of its independence. A heavy-handed Ambassador could have precipitated disaster.

But during his stay in India, Bowles won the admiration, respect and affection of the Indian people, a major accomplishment for any Ambassador. Part of this success was due to Bowles the man, part to Bowles the diplomat.

AS a man, Bowles treated the Indian people with respect. *Pukka* society was shocked when the Bowles children were not placed in an exclusive school, cut off from contact with the people. The proper were indignant when the American Ambassador and his wife rode bicycles in the streets. But the people were delighted, just as they were delighted when, by a fortuitous accident, Bowles had to borrow the traditional striped-pants outfit of the diplomat from another Ambassador.

But Bowles was impressive for more than his friendliness and informality. Working quietly, and with the Indians rather than on his own, Bowles was responsible for many far-reaching changes in India. His theory on Asia in general and on India in particular is straightforward.

In India, there are some three hundred and sixty million people. Millions of these are perpetually poised on the brink of starvation. Millions more escape starvation but have never really known a decent human minimum. The Communists claim their system will produce wealth so that all may live decently. Bowles says, quite simply, that democracy must show it can do the job better. The United States must help India to help itself; it must show Asia and the world that a nation can organize industrial production and drastically overhaul its economy without relying on totalitarian methods.

In the case of India, even though Bowles did not receive all the backing he needed here at home, the great strides being taken demonstrate how right

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his approach is. At any more reasonable period in our country's history, Chester Bowles would be receiving the bipartisan national welcome he deserves. Instead he may be greeted by easy innuendoes from those who make war on Communism by passing stiffly worded resolutions while at the same time they talk of cutting taxes and defense spending.

But Chester Bowles really does not need welcoming committees nor testimonials from McCarthy or McCarran. Painfully, and with great care, he has in India created a record which is ample testimony to the man's effectiveness as a spokesman for democracy. The monument he has thus erected is one few of his critics are likely to match.

BILLIONS FOR DEFENSE

FOR months European visitors have been startled to come upon our air raid shelters here. They have been quick to cite the absence of such precautions back home close to the Soviet frontier. Few of them appear able to face the prospect of another war in Europe—and understandably so. The lack of such precautions overseas may also be partially due to a realization that in an all-out war the prime Soviet target would be the United States.

But the chances are unhappily growing that observant foreign visitors will soon be asking another sort of question: Since the United States would obviously be the principal Russian target, why has so little attention been devoted to America's air defenses? That is the question the Alsops are now pressing in magazine articles and syndicated columns. The question is impossible to get around. Within two short years the Soviet air force is expected to be able to launch a devastating nuclear-bomb attack upon our principal cities.

To face such a prospect squarely is not to ignore all other factors: the effects of a strong and united Western Europe if achieved within the allotted interval; the role of other weapons; internal difficulties within the USSR and its satellites; the disposition of Russian leaders not to risk a major war; or even the restraining hand of Providence.

But none of them is foreseeably certain. And the NATO defense forces would clearly be dependent on unimpeded access to a secure United States. The experts now tell us that effective air defenses can be built up in time to meet the threat, to make a crippling Soviet atom-bomb attack futile to attempt. Such a defense system would cost this nation upwards of twenty billions in the space of the next two years.

Can there be any real argument about erecting such defenses? Without them defeat in the cold war appears imminent, and the free world will have lost the nucleus for its resistance. Such defenses would constitute no continental bastion into which the United States would withdraw; they would hardly serve either as another Maginot Line. They would actually serve to strengthen our bases in other lands. Yet such emphasis on defence would serve as a powerful reminder to the peoples of the world of our own peaceable intentions. It would make a war many times less likely, removing the temptation to strike from an adversary who cannot be counted on to pass up the chance to deal a mortal blow. If the experts succeed in Washington in establishing their case for air defense, it would be irresponsible not to act on it.

As an integral part of a program that includes building up living standards and human freedoms throughout the free world and resisting tyranny everywhere, there would be the strongest argument for spending the additional billions needed to assure adequate air defense.

NEXT WEEK

LYDWINE VAN KERSBERGEN writes of the thirty thousand foreign students now in the United States.

"With few exceptions, these young men and women are the most capable, intelligent citizens of their homelands—the hope and promise of their nations. . . . What hope is there for a strong Christian culture and society in mission countries when their future intellectual leaders are imbibing the secularism and positivism found in American universities? . . . What does it profit us to send the missionary overseas if his work—and the work of generations of missionaries—is being undermined here at home?"

THE CENTRAL CONCERN

THE flexible nature of the United States Constitution can be seen in the history of its interpretation by the Supreme Court during the past twenty years. During the first Administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt the Court was dominated by a legal philosophy which seemed the judicial counterpart of *laissez-faire* economics. By severely limiting the power of the state to intervene in "private" affairs it threatened to destroy the New Deal's major work. This threat was removed by Roosevelt's appointment of "more liberal" Justices during his second term.

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But during the past few years a paradox has become apparent. The New-Dealing Justices, especially Black and Douglas, have seemed to reverse the very philosophy for which they became famous. These former apologists for state intervention have increasingly become the defenders of individual rights against the state. Their new role is evident in the recent dissent of Justices Black, Douglas, Frankfurter and Jackson from the majority decision in the Metzei case.

Ignatz Metzei, born in Gibraltar, lived in the United States for twenty-five years as a resident alien. In 1948 he left the country, and when he sought re-entry in 1950 he was barred by order of the Attorney General and held on Ellis Island. Fourteen other countries subsequently denied him admittance, and the Attorney General refused to grant him a hearing or to divulge the grounds for his deportation. All he would say was that the alien's admission would "endanger national security."

The Supreme Court's decision in this case, written by Justice Clark, now holds that the Attorney General may hold Metzei "indefinitely" (which presumably means for life), and, further, that he need never divulge the reason for the deportation order or for the refusal to grant a hearing.

The four dissenting Justices have answered that to make Metzei's liberty "completely at the mercy of the unreviewable discretion of the Attorney General" violates the constitutional guarantee against deprivation of liberty without due process of law. Their view is summed-up in Justice Black's words: "No society is free where the government makes one person's liberty depend on the arbitrary will of another."

Mr. Black's warning is especially pertinent here since the majority decision seems so obvious a contradiction of the basic premises of a free or, for that matter, a civilized society. The admission of Ignatz Metzei may indeed constitute a "security risk," but it is difficult to imagine any danger to the country from Metzei free as great as we now have from Metzei imprisoned under the arbitrary terms upheld by the court majority.

And, considering this, we may see that the paradox of the "New Deal" Justices' shift from a "statist" to an "individualist" reading of the Constitution is more apparent than real. In the thirties they interpreted the Constitution in such a way as to protect the individual against the real danger of arbitrary economic power. Today the immediate danger has changed. It is, increasingly, the state itself which, in the name of "security," threatens the individual's rights, and so the "New Deal" Justices continue to vindicate the Constitution's flexibility in the face of changing circumstances.

EUROPE: SPRING

EUROPE has taken one more single, agonizingly deliberate step towards unity. The lower house of the West German parliament, the Bundestag, approved the European Army agreement. The vote was fifty-seven per cent for, forty-three per cent against.

The German upper house has yet to approve the treaty, and there will be a test of rearmament's legality in the German courts. And Italy, the Benelux countries and France have also to pass the agreement, and submit another segment of sovereignty to the defense of Europe.

Total agreement is unlikely to come for another year. In France alone, the treaty has a long battle ahead of it. France is involved in a profound division over policy, and her conduct of foreign affairs reflects the division.

If President Eisenhower offers to Premier Mayer and his associates a viable plan for fighting the Indochina war and simultaneously releasing men and units for Europe, he will have opened the door of the policy cage in which the French find themselves. But that solution will unlock the interlocked. More troops available for Europe means a better French counterbalance for the German forces. And a counterbalanced Germany will make a happier French parliament.

So the whole matter moves very slowly, but it moves. The reason that it moves is that it is the only rational course for Europe to follow, and even in its hectic infant days, European unification has been effective.

Mayor Ernst Reuter is in the United States now, taking part in a drive to raise funds for the East Zone refugees in West Berlin. His report of conditions in East Berlin and East Germany is striking, and may put heart into the weary. He says that East Berlin is all but destitute and its people dispirited. He says that RIAS and the other propaganda agencies of the West reach the people in East Germany and are effective. He says, in short, that the policy of military guarantees and of economic assistance for Berlin has made that city 'the best weapon the West has in the cold war.' Twenty-five thousand refugees a month from the East Zone support his statements.

The situation in all of Europe is one of making a century of history in a decade. The remarkable thing is not the obstacle before us, but the accomplishment behind us. The obstacles will eventually fall to patience and perseverance. Mr. Dulles has quietly tabled his ultimatum. France has a new hope of relief. Germany has taken the next legislative step. Patience and perseverance are there.

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FOR THE ARTIST

IT was Graham Greene who said that for a writer disloyalty might be a duty. Greene, of course, was talking about a creative writer who must put down what others may find disillusioning, disedifying, even scandalous, if he is to be honest with himself and faithful to his craft. He was speaking in particular of the problem facing the Catholic novelist like himself who refuses to be turned into a special-pleader or conscious apologist, even for the Church.

Mr. Greene's views on this question contrast sharply with an opinion on art recently publicized in the Catholic press. A prominent Catholic lecturer had said that in the Catholic view of art, artistic considerations don't count for much. "The Christian purpose of art is to aid the spiritual and moral well-being of man. It is not for the purpose of effecting intellectual or sensory delight," he said.

It is a little difficult to say just what all this means. It is true that the ultimate end of all human effort should be the "spiritual and moral well-being of man." But as this is true of artistic effort, it can be accomplished only on art's own terms—and these terms are precisely the "effecting of intellectual and sensory delight." The ultimate end of art cannot be served by denigrating, or destroying altogether, art's intrinsic end. To say that the end of art is not artistic, as this speaker held, is clearly nonsense. It is to destroy the very meaning of art and to turn the artist into a caricature of himself. What it does to the traditional Catholic philosophy of aesthetics, I leave to the philosophers, who must still be weeping for St. Thomas.

What is really disturbing here, I think, is that the statement was so widely publicized, and without comment, in the Catholic press. There probably isn't a Catholic philosopher in the country who would seriously defend the proposition that "intellectual or sensory delight" is not the end of art. From one end of the country to the other, Catholic collegians are memorizing St. Thomas Aquinas' definition of "beauty"—*"pulchra sunt quae visa placent,"* "beauty is that which when seen pleases." At the same time a flat denial of the proposition gains banner headlines and, presumably, almost universal approval in the diocesan press! Why?

Well, the speaker who was quoted had as his purpose the defense of the Legion of Decency. Now let me say that I think a good case can be made for the Legion of Decency and the speaker was fully within his rights in defending that organization against criticism. So this column is not concerned with the Legion of Decency as such. What it is concerned with is a kind of pious philistinism which is gaining strength among American Catholics. There is a tendency to abandon our own philosophic principles—about art especially—once they leave the classroom and enter the market place.

This is the age of the political picket marching up and down in front of the theatre or concert-hall. It is the age of the cultural vigilante who would turn the artist into a patrioteer and the poet into a propagandist. On the other side of the Curtain the cultural commissar has come into full power—the Soviet art-work is judged not according to how well it gives "intellectual or sensory delight" but how well it conforms to the Cause.

Everywhere, it seems, people are judging the artist and giving little or no thought to his art. Artists themselves are being seduced by the patriotic orthodoxies, on both sides of the Curtain.

If ever there was need for a wholesome, holy respect for art itself, it is now when art is being attacked, politicized, used and abused on all sides. And if ever there was a philosophy which could call men back to a realization of art's intrinsic value, it is to be found in the aesthetics of the Catholic tradition. But that philosophy, in this case as in others, has to be made meaningful by our public attitude and public statements before it will ever gain a hearing from others.

We can't go on as if art has no claims to make of its own, sneer at the artist and destroy the meaning of his work, judging it by the standards which properly belong to apologetics, propaganda or sermonizing, and then, after all that, expect to claim the world of art for the Christian cause. Why should the artist turn to the thing that he thinks destroys his art? Why should he listen to those who ridicule him and his place in the world? How can he see his own relationship to God and the work of his hand to God's creation when those who claim to speak for God seem to despise the one thing that might bring him to God? In the larger sense, the question remains: how can Catholics "restore all things" while they apparently reject what other men *know* to be good?

There are special problems of art and prudence, to be sure. But we will never get artists to give serious attention to prudence until they are convinced that we give serious attention to art. And we certainly won't foster that conviction by publicly, almost proudly, destroying the meaning of art.

T. S. Eliot wrote once:

> Lord, shall we not bring these gifts to Your service?
> Shall we not bring to Your service all our powers
> For life, for dignity, grace and order
> And intellectual pleasures of the senses?
> The Lord Who created must wish us to create
> And employ our creation again in His service
> Which is already His service in creating. . . .

JOHN COGLEY.

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Waterfront Priest

"THE MOST CYNICAL AGNOSTIC COULD NOT HELP BUT FEEL THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF CHRIST WHEN FATHER CORRIDAN DESCRIBES THE WATERFRONT."

BUDD SCHULBERG

LAST winter, when waterfront racketeering was front-page news, a tall, intense, youthfully balding New York Irishman wearing the cassock of a Jesuit priest aroused the curiosity of millions of TV and radio fans of Dave Garroway, Tex and Jinx, and other prominent programs.

"The mob is tryin' to scare the men off from giving the Crime Commission the facts on waterfront extortion, kick-backs, shakedowns, pilferage and all the rest of the mess that's been infecting our great port of New York," Father John Corridan told his audience. "They're boastin' already that when the Crime investigation is gone and forgotten, there'll be bodies floatin' in the river. Well, that's a good sign, in a way. It means the fast-money crowd who muscled in on our honest hard-working longshoremen are feelin' shaken and desperate. It may not come today or tomorrow or next week, but little by little the harbor workers, and the union leaders and the politicians are waking up. It's a long, uphill pull, but one of these days we're going to see law and order, job security, regulated hiring and union democracy raise our longshoremen to the level of dignity reached in other key industries."

"Is he real," a friend of mine actually asked me after having seen Father Corridan on the Garroway show, "or is he a young Pat O'Brien made up as a priest for a movie part?"

I laughed, but sympathetically, for I had had a similar reaction three years earlier. At that time, in the course of some research for a forthcoming movie, I asked some newspapermen how I could get the feel of the waterfront as it really is. Much to my surprise their answer was: "Go down and see Father John Corridan, the waterfront priest. He's been on top of it for years."

Mr. Schulberg is the author of "What Makes Sammy Run?" and "The Disenchanted."

Next day I was having lunch at Billy the Oysterman's with this chain-smoking, ruddy-complexioned man in his early forties who looked fit enough to swing a hook with the best of them. He was too full of his subject to do much eating. It seemed to me the most unusual talk I had ever heard, combining the gritty language of the dock-workers, with mob lingo, the facts and figures of a trained economist and the teachings of Christ.

Listening to Father Corridan with growing amazement, I felt myself entering a world I would not have believed possible in America, just as I might have cried "fake!" if I had seen a movie about a Catholic priest who becomes a leader among rough-and-tumble dock-wallopers, as tough in his own way as the Mickey Bowers, Anastasias, Clementes and other criminal elements who have been allowed to gouge longshoremen and grab off an illegal three hundred and fifty million dollars annually from the port.

For the past six years, as assistant director of the Xavier Labor School, Father Corridan has put in as much as eighteen and twenty hours a day studying the waterfront problem. He has studied the figures pier by pier. He has talked to hundreds of longshoremen in his small office, which is littered with waterfront clippings and reports. He has gone into the homes of the dock workers to talk over the meat-and-potatoes problem with their wives. He has talked to cops, district attorneys, Port officials, union officers, rank-and-file leaders, State Employment people, Congressional investigators, Government labor authorities.

Call off a pier on either side of the river and Father Corridan can tell you who controls it; he's got the name and number of the hiring boss, the boss loader and the treasurer of the local who never bothered to keep books. He has traced their political connections. For years, while there was a general hush-hush policy regarding the fabulous "Mr. Big," William J. McCor-

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mack, who parleyed a horse-and-wagon into a hundred-million-dollar waterfront empire, Father Corridan has been studying the connections between him and such unsavory characters as strong-arm specialist Albert Ackalitis and the notorious gunman Linky Mitchell.

FULL of the nervous intensity of the waterfront he serves, Father Corridan understands, and hopes by this understanding eventually to correct, the brutal and desperate measures used by hunters and hunted alike in the industrial jungle of New York harbor. "What I try to do—what all the waterfront priests try to do—is to help 'em learn how to defend themselves, how to bargain for themselves, in a lawful, intelligent way. What they need down here, if we're ever to see this mess cleaned up, is their own, strong, honest organization. That way they won't get pushed around by the union racketeers, the shipping companies or the Commies."

That's the key to the unique labor class Father Corridan conducts at the Xavier Labor School in the Chelsea area that has been spearheading the revolt against the Anastasias, the Bowers mob and the other labor racketeers who have been terrorizing the waterfront. Men come in off the docks in their work clothes, their faces still grimy from the hold or sweating from the heavy work. Because the Jesuit is known for his fearless stand against mob rule on the docks, attending his class is not considered healthy by the bully-boys who have muscled in on so many locals. "Sometimes our men have to slip in the back way after dark," says Father Corridan.

During one of his talks a heckler kept interrupting. As a Corridan man described it, "Father John had his number right away. He spotted him as one of the boys. So right in the middle of his talk he stops and goes up to this sharp-looking character. Cool as a cucumber, he says, 'I know who sent you, so go back to your bosses and deliver this message for me: tell 'em that if anything happens to the men I'm trying to help here, I'll know who's responsible, and I'll personally see to it that they are broken throughout this port. They'll pay and I'll see that they pay.' "

Father Corridan doesn't talk religion to the longshoremen who slip into Xavier to plan their resistance to open crime and union corruption. "It's straight bread 'n butter, dollars 'n cents," he says. " I try to pick the men who are natural leaders and who have the guts to talk up for honest trade unionism on the docks. I try to put them wise to the stuff they ought to know."

It was Corridan, for instance, who enlightened the men as to their rightful claim to some ten million in unpaid overtime under Article 7B1 of the Wage-Hour Law. He wrote a letter to every Senator and to all the key Representatives explaining in detail the legal and moral justification for the longshoremen's case, at the same time urging a thorough investigation of the chronic infection that has paralyzed the greatest harbor in the world.

The only way that the priest touches on religion directly in his labor class is to ask his students what they consider the basis of economics. Invariably, they name "money," "bread," "profit," or "labor supply." And invariably Corridan's answer is, "Man." "Only man is capable of knowing and loving," he says. "In other words I teach 'em the dignity of man." The Christian strictures against man's inhumanity to man are brought up to date in the Pope's encyclicals on social justice and Father Corridan always has this in the back of his mind, but, as he says, "We don't want to bog 'em down with a lot of theories, religious or otherwise. These are men with a problem—the problem of how to live like human beings—and they're looking for help in how to solve it. They want practical stuff, not a lot of heavy water."

The antiquated system of hiring known as the "shape-up," (outlawed in England over a century ago, Corridan points out) is not only un-American, a menace to our efficiency and security, but un-Christian, Father Corridan believes.

Christianity, for him, is not merely abstract dogmas but a living force. The most cynical agnostic could not help but feel the presence and the power of Christ when Father Corridan describes the inhuman conditions he has seen on the waterfront. "I figured out, on a basis of yearly income and man-hours, that there is about enough work to support seventeen thousand longshoremen and their families," he says. "There are more than twice that many shaping-up. The uncertainty, the humiliation of having to stand there and beg with your eyes for work twice a day while ex-cons look you over like you were so much meat in the butcher-shop—no wonder the men who get passed over at the morning shape wait for the bars to open and see how many belts they can get into 'em before they shape up again at noon." In a memorable sermon on the docks, one of the few times when he revealed the spiritual passion behind his interest in human welfare on the waterfront, he said:

> I suppose some people would smirk at the thought of Christ in the shape-up. It is about as absurd as the fact that He carried carpenter's tools in His hands and earned His bread by the sweat of his brow. As absurd as the fact that Christ redeemed all men irrespective of their race, color, or station in life. It can be absurd only to those of whom Christ has said, "Having eyes, they see not; and having ears, they hear not." Because they don't want to see or hear. Christ also said, "If you do it to the least of

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mine, you do it to me." So Christ is in the shape-up. . . .

He stands in the shape-up knowing that all won't get work and maybe He won't. What does Christ think of the efficiency argument of the shape-up? . . . Some people think that the Crucifixion took place only on Calvary. Christ works on a pier and His back aches because there are a fair number of the "boys" on the pier. They don't work, but have their rackets at which so many wink. What does Christ think of the man who picks up a longshoreman's brass check and takes twenty per cent interest at the end of the week?

Christ goes to a union meeting. Sees how a meeting is run. Sees how few go. Sees how many don't speak. Sees a certain restraint. At some meetings He sees a few with hundred-fifty dollar suits and diamond rings on their fingers . . . drawing a couple of expense accounts. . . . Christ walks into a tenement and talks with the wife of a longshoreman. Her heart is heavy. . . .

As an audience, there's nothing tougher than longshoremen. They're edgy and suspicious, quick to smell a phoney. They gag easily on verbal syrup. They've *had* the silver-tongued orators, from the president of their International up and down, trying to sweet-talk them out of their rights. Their name for former Mayor O'Dwyer was "Weeping Willie." "Maybe we don' have too much education," a docker told me in a Chelsea saloon, "but you don' hafta go t' collich t' know who's with ya and who ain't. Father John is with us. He ain't tryin' t' sell us out like these itchy-finger boys posin' as organizers. And he ain't signin' us up for some phoney peace pledge like the Commies either. He's one of us. We believe in God up there and a fair shake down here."

CORRIDAN didn't learn about gnawing poverty and the cause of humanity out of any book. His father, an immigrant from County Kerry, died when John was nine, leaving his mother Hannah to raise five boys. "The old man didn't leave any money—he was an honest cop," the priest explains. "He was always pounding beats in out of the way places like Rockaway because an honest cop cramped their style."

Mrs. Corridan worked as a cleaning woman, helped out by a small pension and Child Welfare. The boys learned how to handle themselves in the scrappy, competitive world of the hungry West Side. They had to hustle for every nickel in the incessant free-for-all of tenement life. The only way the Corridan boys could get enough money to see a movie was by pooling their few pennies and hoping to run them up into dimes and quarters in a street-corner crap-game.

One time young John made pass after pass and the money was beginning to bulge in his pocket when he looked around at the hard faces of the bigger boys with whom he was playing and realized they were never going to let him take his winnings out of the game. Recklessly, and apparently carelessly, he began to lose the money back faster than he had won it. When he convinced the bullying crap-shooters that he was "cleaned," by showing them his empty pockets, he was at last allowed to go on his way. His brothers followed him listlessly; they had set their hearts on that movie. But when they got around the corner John reached down into his knickers—way down—and produced three all-important dimes. He had pushed them through a hole in his pockets before ostensibly playing back into the game the whole of his winnings.

One Christmas there wasn't enough money in the house to buy any real presents for the Corridan boys. John didn't care so much for himself—he was now eleven and prematurely wise in the ways of the tenement. But he worried about his little three-year-old brother. He knew the tot had asked Santa Claus for a fire-engine—he had been talking of nothing else for weeks. As Christmas approached, the little boy's eagerness, and confidence that Santa would answer his prayers reached such proportions that John felt himself overwhelmed with temptation.

He went to a toy-store—a chain-store, he recalls, for he had figured with a Robin Hood's logic that they could best afford to absorb the loss— and priced a beautiful red fire-engine. Two dollars. He hid out until the store was closed, then sneaked up to the cash-register and jimmied it in a way he had learned from the hoodlum element of the neighborhood. The drawer shot open. "I looked at all that money," Father Corridan remembers. "I could have taken it all. But I just wanted that two dollars."

Later John had the problem of telling the priest in confession. "That was a turning point for my relations with the Church," Father Corridan says now. "Seeing how much that fire-engine meant to my little brother and knowing what an empty Christmas it would have seemed if Santa had let him down, I made up my mind that if the priest really gave me hell I was through with the Church. So I went to confession that day with my knees trembling." The priest was understanding. "I did penance," Father Corridan recalls, "but I didn't have to give the fire-engine back."

When he grew up to become a priest himself, he never forgot this incident. He does not condone dishonesty and disrespect for law. But he feels his own brief adventure in using bad means to a good end helps him to understand the desperate measures his parishioners can sometimes be driven to when poverty pins them to the wall, especially when their families are made to suffer for reasons of greed and indifference.

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"I'm an apple-eater," he says, referring to the early days of the depression when he and his brothers saw the humiliation his proud, hard-working mother suffered at the hands of officious social workers. Yes, Father Corridan doesn't have to draw on any books or second-hand knowledge when he describes the life of a longshoreman's wife in her cold-water railroad flat, pinching pennies to feed her kids. That's why he made up his mind that he would serve God among the poorest of His children, and that he would devote his life to social justice.

Five years ago a group of rank-and-filers came to Xavier and said, "Father John, a strike is brewing on the waterfront, whether the official leadership knows it or not. The men want a welfare fund and a vacation clause. If we don't try to get it for 'em, the Commies will grab the issue and try to make themselves the heroes."

Characteristically, Father Corridan's response wasn't to fly off the handle in an emotional way. First he sat down with an experienced insurance man and worked out a practical welfare plan on the Blue Cross model that could be operated for less than four cents an hour. Then he went down to Washington and managed to see Cyrus Ching, then head of the National Mediation Board. Corridan did not rely on a spiritual, humanitarian appeal. He had carefully marshalled the facts and figures to prove his case. The needs of the dock-workers had never had such specific presentation. When the strike did break out, just as the priest knew it would though official leaders had refused to take it seriously, he wrote an article for the Jesuit magazine *America* detailing the case for the longshoremen. Then he had twelve thousand reprints of it distributed on the waterfront.

The program Father Corridan laid out responded exactly to the long-frustrated desires of the majority. His name became a by-word on the waterfront. When the Conciliation Service met to settle the strike, a copy of his article was placed before every negotiator. When the Board approved both the welfare fund and vacations with pay, Father Corridan was widely credited with having won something for the men that they had been after for twenty-five years.

He just grins when you mention this. "All I did was tip the Conciliation boys off to the pitch."

HOLDING services for striking longshoremen three years ago, Father Corridan offered this prayer:

"For those longshoremen who are straight and are good family men, God be praised; for those who slip every once in a while and lose hope, God have mercy; to *those responsible,* God grant the grace to see things as Christ sees them on the waterfront, for the time is growing short when God will have no mercy."

A year or so ago, when another rebellion against gang-ridden union officialdom broke out in the Chelsea local that Xavier men have managed to influence after the collapse of the old "Cockeye" Dunn mob, and a spirit of protest spread up and down a waterfront that union racketeers could no longer control, the Jesuit was back in the news again. At daybreak he was on the waterfront leading the aroused dock-workers in prayer:

"God grant that our government will order you back to work in honor. May God protect and preserve you this day."

"You think these fellows are Communists," Corridan grins at you. "Strange breed of Communists who never miss Mass and who come to me and our Catholic Labor School for help and advice. Better not call 'em that, unless you want to get belted. Joe Ryan wishes they were Communists. Then he could wrap himself in the old flag and have it easy. Actually, he's the one who's playing into the hands of the Commies. Because these are loyal and decent, God-fearing Americans who don't need or want the Communists to win their battles for them. The way to stop Communism—Xavier men taught by my "boss" Father Philip Carey have done it in the teamsters union, the telephone and lots of others—the way to stop 'em from capturing these unions is to find out what the men really want, what their real beefs are, and then fight for it fairly and squarely and even harder than the Commies do."

One of Father Corridan's staunchest disciples is a gnarled and battle-scarred veteran of thirty years on the mid-town docks who admits he would do anything the waterfront priest asked him—even if it meant laying down his life in the cause of honest unionism. Twice he's been left to die with cargo hooks in him after standing up to the underworld goons who prey on the dockers. Recently Father Corridan wanted to get him off the docks because he feared the scrappy old veteran might be knocked off in one of those typical waterfront "accidents"—a crane slips or a truck backs up unexpectedly, something like that.

But this embattled old man said to me, "What've I got to worry about? Like I told the old lady, 'Any day I don't come home, just call Father John. He'll look after everything. Long as I'm sure he's gonna be with me at the end to give the last rites and ease me into the hereafter, I figger I'm on velvet." This was no speech. The way he said it, it was the simplest thing in the world. Then his wizened, scuffed-up, weather-beaten face split in a funny grin. What he said next had something spiritual about it, but it was waterfront style. "Sure the mob is tough, but Father John's tougher. One of these days he's gonna run 'em right into the river. That Father John, he really knows the score."

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FROM ITALY

The Reluctant Feminists

Rome

THE nomination of the new American Ambassador to Rome, Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce, has caused some unrest among the women of Italy, particularly among that small minority which is interested in the emancipation of women. The attractive author of "The Women" as the most important diplomatic representative in Rome—what a lesson, they say, for the Italian woman, who has not even the right to serve on a jury! American press comments criticizing the nomination of Mrs. Luce to a country where women have so few rights as compared with the United States, were reported in Italian newspapers with the rather sophistic reply from the Italian Embassy, pointing out that there are more women in the Italian Parliament than in the American Congress or the British Parliament. That fact does not preserve the immense majority of Italian women, even the best-educated and most well-to-do, from as vast an ignorance of women's rights as untouchables in India have about trade unions.

At any rate, the American press comments were felt to be a sort of challenge, and a meeting of the most outstanding feminists of all political persuasions and their sympathizers was held in Rome. The audience was made up almost entirely of well-dressed, bejeweled women.

All the speakers agreed on one point: Italian women, and Latin and Mediterranean women in general, are shockingly indifferent to the question of their own emancipation. This in spite of the fact that they often possess much more character and vitality than their men; in spite of marriage laws which are more severe for women than for men, and in spite of the fact that women make up more than fifty-three per cent of the Italian electorate and have practically saved Italy from Communism. This last is generally recognized, as a proportional majority of women voters brought the Christian Democratic party into power, immediately after women were granted the right to vote, and has kept it there with a safe majority ever since. The Communist-Socialist opposition has a proportional majority of men's votes.

Why don't the women throw off the yoke? All the means to reach the goal are there. The right to vote was given to them like an unrequested gift. Why doesn't the Italian woman take the next step herself? Why doesn't she acquire power and personal property as her sisters have in the United States and in Northern Europe?

During the discussions and the lively private conversations following the meeting, the most surprising reaction came from the fur-coated, bejeweled audience, which was supposed to have been fired with enthusiasm. It turned out that practically all of these women were under the spell of one all-dominating fear—the fear that through the proposed fight and agitation, they would lose their "womanliness." The well-documented arguments of the speakers broke like waves against a wall of rock, and that wall was: "We don't want to lose our womanliness." A young girl even declared that so far as she was concerned, she didn't mind a bit being a "so-called slave." It was of no avail to explain that it is by no means necessary that a woman fighting for the feminist cause should lose her womanliness. The example of the attractive women who are active in the world of affairs was unconvincing. The wall of rock remained as smooth and hard as before.

During private discussions, the speakers and their sympathizers tried hard to find out just why Latin women are so indifferent to the feminist cause. It is an indifference all the more surprising since it is in striking contrast to the sort of revolution made by women in Anglo-Saxon and Nordic countries in obtaining full equality with men—a revolution with its victims, its recognized leaders, its defeats and final triumph. If this triumph did not spring out of an absolute necessity, it would never have taken place or would have been choked at the outset. Why does not the Latin woman feel that necessity? What dissatisfaction was it that compelled the woman of the North to make this revolution, and what is it the Latin woman is so obviously satisfied with as to be indifferent to the revolution? Which of them is now, from the subjective point of view, the happier?

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Could it be that the reasons are economic? One of the speakers suggested that the economic importance of the woman in the family had been gradually decreased with industrialization, and that women had finally been compelled to organize like industrial workers to defend their material interests in that cold and hostile world in which they had to earn their daily bread. But this reason failed to hold up when it was pointed out that Latin women already working in industry show the same indifference towards emancipation as their more sheltered and conservative sisters.

Could the reason be religious, someone else asked. This is hardly possible either, or at least it could not be of decisive importance, as the Latin women most indifferent to religion, those of the French industrial proletariat or of the most fashionable classes, do not show any more interest in emancipation than the believers. And Catholic women in countries like the Netherlands and Germany, or the Anglo-Saxon countries, are for all practical purposes as deeply involved in affairs as any of their countrywomen. And here, of course, Mrs. Luce came into the picture again as a Catholic. Not even politics gave the key to the mystery, as none of Italy's political parties, from the fascist right to the extreme Communist left, has ever shown the slightest interest in the emancipation of women, not even when, just after the war, the vote was given to women.

AT this point, someone called attention to the almost comic fear shown by so many of the women in the audience about "losing their womanliness." Could not that fear somehow give an indication? It is not a secret that the final end of womanliness is the man. Could it be, by any chance, that the Latin woman is satisfied with obtaining what she wants *through* the male, and *towards* the male? *Through* the male if she wants to have influence and power in the men's world, and *towards* the male if she wants to gain his love and confidence for its own sake, and thus to influence him, and develop her own personality. Could it be that the whole agitation for emancipation and equality of rights appears as artificial and unnecessary to the Latin woman, as she is able already to reach what she wants in a way that is for her the only natural way? And here, of course, the male is spoken of in the broad sense of the word, not only as husband or lover, but as son, brother or father—without any complexes *a là* Freud.

Everyone at the meeting began to think about this, and finally agreed that this must be the explanation. It was obvious that womanliness, with all that it stands for—not to be confused with sex appeal, which is only a factor in it—was the important thing, and it was that which resisted all the arguments of the feminist speakers. This conclusion corresponded too with the Latin woman's relation to the men in her life. Generally speaking, her relationship to her men, be they lovers, husbands, sons, brothers, or fathers, is much more intimate than those of her Nordic or Anglo-Saxon sisters.

This great intimacy, above all within the closely-knit framework of the family, means a greater understanding, and greater possibilities for influencing the male and, of course, greater opportunities for the male to influence her. Aggressive feminists and rabid woman-haters are practically unknown in the Latin world. The relation man-woman is seen more under a sign of solidarity, than under the sign of opposed and self-contained interests. This even when the relationship, as often happens elsewhere, develops into a struggle for predominance.

If a Latin woman's way of manifesting herself through her men appears to emancipated women, used to direct competition with men, as almost humiliating, it seems to satisfy the Latin woman completely. She persists in considering the man as a partner with common interests, not as a competitor. For her there seems to be something wrong with women who must fight for equality of rights to manifest themselves. She suspects that women must have been very unhappy, very lonely and very unsatisfied to behave in that strange way, and she suspects, too, that they are not, from the subjective point of view, any happier now.

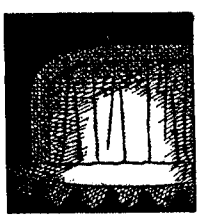
She might platonically admire the performance and energy of emancipated women in their competition with men, particularly if they do not lose their womanliness—Mrs. Luce for instance. But this platonic admiration never turns into envy, for the Latin woman considers herself lucky enough by nature to be able to do without emancipation altogether.

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN.

THE STAGE

MISALLIANCE

A grotesque efflorescence—of wicker furniture and milk glass, of Edwardian blazers and plus-fours, and a wallpaper scrolled with butterflies giddily beating their way up into the inane blue—



encloses the small, perfect world of Bernard Shaw's "Misalliance." And what a pleasure it is to be back again in civilization, after so many light-years among the hottentots! The scheme of human relations is sharply defined, the surface at once solid and pellucid—a glittering arena for these spectacular arabesques of the imagination. All the old intellectual

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artillery is trundled out, the priming rods readied, and flame put to fuse: what astonishes is the loud report Shaw's moral powder can still give off.

"People do not know about families," observed Miss Ivy Compton-Burnett in one of her more sibylline moods. But Shaw obviously does, and it is—not surprisingly—of Miss Compton-Burnett's antiseptic world that "Misalliance" first makes us think. Its inhabitants —insatiable talkers all, masticating experience with voracious and terrifying relish—are chiefly members of a middle-class English family financially established on the primal need for underwear, and volubly waiting in their summerhouse for *something* to happen. When "life" showers down upon them (literally out of the blue) in the person of a dashing young aviator, a Polish lady acrobat dedicated to risking her life daily, and a local revolutionary socialist ("Rome fell! Babylon fell! Hindhead's turn is next!"), they respond precisely as does all that great swarm of Shavian monsters: they go right on talking.

Circling brilliantly, like some ancient, prehensile hawk, around the subjects which drew him again and again, Shaw claws lightly at the tangled web of familial relations, at "the life force," the platitudes of democracy and the truths of aristocracy, and the illicit love which binds socialism intolerably to capitalism. No new chord is struck, but no note fails to reverberate; they are all variations on the emergent pattern of a mind grand and noble in its proportions. The temper of these meditations is sunny and humane, and the comic gloss which enhances them lustrous, but one is brought again freshly to the awareness of how much will there was in Shaw's gaiety, how much tough distinction of spirit! The wound of family life lies open beneath "Misalliance," but Shaw neither fondles nor inflames it. The comic view—the many faces of irony, the commitment to no commitment—is perhaps the last resource of the tragic spirit; at that juncture, wit alone can make the burden tolerable.

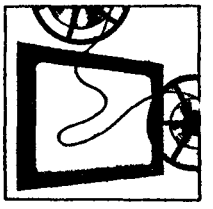
The production of "Misalliance," directed by Mr. Cyril Ritchard and presented under the aegis of the City Drama Company, is an act of perception singular and distinguished in all its details. At once crusty, warm and succulent, it manipulates Shaw's intellectual weights and balances with a feline grace. Stylistically, no other acting ensemble has exhibited so much visual and verbal sensibility, such a mellifluous touch, since Mr. John Gielgud's postwar productions of Wilde and Congreve. There is a special, chauvinistic satisfaction, too, in noting that the present triumph is so indigenously American. We have not a formal theatrical tradition in this country, but we do have an abundance of what Miss Beatrice Lillie calls "pure living and clean thinking," and these have carried the current ensemble to the limits of excellence. Everyone—William Redfield, Roddy McDowell, Tamara Geva, Jerome Kilty, Richard Kiley, Dorothy Sands, Bramwell Fletcher, Jan Farrand and especially Barry Jones as the exuberant underwear tycoon—brought indisputable authority and palpable affection to these portraits of further specimens from the Museum of Shavian History. (*At the Ethel Barrymore.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

MAD MADAM MERMAN

THE next time someone says that Hollywood *always* muffs a stage musical comedy when it's turned into a movie, you tell him about "Call Me Madam." In filming it, Producer Sol Siegel wisely retained all the Irving Berlin songs except "I Like Ike" and added "International Rag," a new Berlin tune which Ethel Merman puts over with gusto, and "What Chance Have I with Love?" to which Donald O'Connor does a solo song-and-dance in fine style. As a matter of fact, scriptwriter Arthur Sheekman also kept most of the Howard Lindsay-Russell Crouse book, which was specially written for a Merman interpretation of a Madam Ambassador.



The role of Sally Adams, (the fabulous, wealthy, big-hearted Oklahoma widow who is sent by the President as ambassador to Lichtenburg) suits Merman perfectly. Whether she's singing loud and brassy about herself as the "Hostess with the Mostes' on the Ball," or getting starry-eyed and mellow as she melts into the duet about "Marrying for Love" with Lichtenburg's elegant Foreign Affairs Secretary (George Sanders, who can sing as well as turn on the charm), or whether she's efficiently putting the shocked chargé d'affaires (Billy De Wolfe) in his place by explaining she's in charge, or lending a shoulder to her press attaché (Donald O'Connor) in that wonderful counterpoint duet "You're Just in Love," she sparkles with enthusiasm. She may be flashy, noisy and even naively vulgar, but her zest for life is unquenchable.

If Merman were the only asset in "Madam," this musical film would still be worth seeing, but it is so chock-full of joys that it easily lands among the year's best movies. Except in a few static scenes, Walter Lang's direction moves along at a pace that keeps up with those lively Berlin tunes. The cast responds well to the infectious comedy spirit of the script; and even the Technicolor seems brighter as it bathes those two "mythical" countries (Lichtenburg and the United States of America) in a glow.

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THERE are several other less impressive new musicals on our screens now. "She's Back on Broadway" gives Virginia Mayo plenty of opportunity to show her noteworthy gams, but it's stuck with a story made up of equal parts of sense and nonsense. If you can overlook this, you'll find that the film has some good backstage stuff and some amusing production numbers. But the only surprise in this pictures comes when the big show which all the film's fuss is about does *not* turn out to be a hit.

THERE is a pleasant little musical around called "Meet Me at the Fair." Its story, derived from Gene Markey's novel *The Great Companions,* concerns a big-hearted guy (Dan Dailey) who runs a medicine show, his big-hearted Negro assistant ("Scat Man" Crothers), an orphan (Chet Allen) who runs away from the Detention Home and tries to join Dan's show, a welfare worker (Diana Lynn) who thinks that carnivals are no place for a boy, and many politicians, townspeople, orphans and others all dressed in 1904 costumes and acting as folksy as all get-out. All this works out pretty much as you might expect.

I DON'T think an entertainer as good as Donald O'Connor should be wasted on such minor efforts as "I Love Melvin," but he certainly does brighten this musical. As a photographer from *Look* who gets quite a yen for Debbie Reynolds and promises to get her picture on the cover, Donald has to work his entire bag of tricks to keep the thin story pepped up. Debbie Reynolds helps him and so do Allyn Joslyn, Jim Backus, and Una Merkel. But it's Mrs. O'Connor's boy who keeps things going. His dance on roller skates is probably worth the price of admission.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

AN APPEAL

Abbess Maria Metilde di Berti of the Monastero delle Benedettine di S. Cecelia, Piazza S. Cecilia 22, Rome - Trastevere, Italy, writes of the sad decline in fortune of her ancient contemplative Benedictine convent, which was established by Pope Clement VII in 1527. Originally the community was endowed with adequate property, and the nuns excelled in fine needlework for the Basilica. When the Papal States were suppressed in 1870, this cloistered community lost much of its property, including part of the convent building itself. Since then its patrimony has gradually been exhausted. In order to set up a means of livelihood in keeping with a cloistered life of prayer, Abbess Maria seeks funds to buy a knitting machine that would enable the community to become self-supporting.

COMMUNICATIONS

"THE CONSERVATIVE CATHOLIC"

Santa Clara, Calif.

TO the Editors: The critics of my essay "The Conservative Catholic" have done me the honor of attacking my position with great vigor. I am grateful for this because it is only in open controversy that we can forge a social philosophy which can be an effective instrument for Catholic action in an alien world.

Initially, let me turn to the word "liberal," and indicate what appears to be, in this controversy, a semantic confusion at best, and an inferiority complex at worst. If the term "liberal Catholic" is to be maintained at all, it must have some intelligibility which is uniquely its own. If the term "liberal" simply indicates that body of Catholic social doctrine usually called "social justice," then the word "liberal" means nothing distinct from social justice. This is Catholicism in social action, the Christian conscience in the market place.

As I pointed out in my article, it seems absurd to designate as "liberal" that which is integrally Catholic, binding the faithful under pain of sin. The continued use of the "liberal" label can be justified only by those Catholics who feel a sense of guilt toward the iniquities of the *laissez-faire* order. But let us never forget that *we* did not create that order; it grew up beyond the Catholic mind; it is stamped with a Calvinist visage; on that score, we have nothing to expiate.

Secondly, if the term "liberal" is used to signify something distinct from Catholic social justice, then that distinct thing can only be some doctrine related to that body of philosophical dogma and political and social action historically calling itself "liberal," and recognized by others under that same label. Now to renew again and to amplify my argument: liberalism —that historical doctrine having its religious roots in Calvinism, its economic roots in the English Reformation, and coming into its own in the nineteenth century—is a doctrine that condemns itself economically because it works toward a collectivized universe that stifles the full development of both the individual person and the family unity; it condemns itself socially, because it reduces the human spirit to the anonymous relations imposed artificially by a mass culture, ever working for an external uniformity that masks an inner spiritual vacuum.

I am happy to see that Mr. Philip J. Scharper agrees with me that the vocation of the Church calls for its full incarnation within each cultural era that passes through historical time. Catholic man can and must take to himself whatsoever truth and goodness comes to him from beyond the City of God, for this too is from Him Who is the Truth. But the age the Chris-

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tian now faces in the West is not a pagan world waiting for the fullness of the Incarnation; it is, on the contrary, a world that has come *after* the Incarnation, that has largely rejected the Incarnation, and that has built itself on the ruins of a Christendom rubbled by its own spirit.

Mr. Scharper speaks of history as a "process in which the Divine Plan is unfolded." With Saint Paul I pretend to no understanding of the Mind of God, but with the full Catholic tradition I do pretend to some understanding of the nature of man, and I insist that this nature cannot flower within the modern world, because the modern mind is, at its very core, anti-humanistic, and therefore incapable of incarnating the Gospel. This is not to surrender man to the darkness; for unless we are aware that man is blinded, we cannot hope to give him vision. In order to incarnate the Faith in this our own time we cannot sanctify the darkness; we can only destroy that darkness with Light.

I am accused of parochialism. I return the charge, because the "liberal Catholic" does not see that the modern age, with all its bewildering ideological and political complexity, is nonetheless woven of one piece. The conventional "left"—all the way to Communism—and the conventional "right"—all the way to the National Association of Manufacturers—have implicitly accepted the basic economic and social myths of the age: continued expansion of machine production, a continual pulverization of the remnants of the older familial and regional culture, a never-ending collectivization of society. Whenever a political doctrine opposing these modern presuppositions has put itself forth, bourgeois capitalism has joined hands with the liberal, the socialist, and the Communist to crush it.

The most significant social and political movement on the Continent between the two World Wars was the "Green Revolution": the silent rising of the peasantry of the European heartland. The Peasant parties were bitterly opposed by almost every parliamentary interest in existence, because this revolution from the land threatened the whole social structure implicitly accepted by every articulate and organized political interest in the West: i.e., the men who have fashioned the collectivized, industrialized universe, centered in the city, housing the great masses of the proletarianized workers. If the "liberal Catholic" would reflect on this curious phenomenon in the light of the Communist Manifesto, he will begin to see the whole point of this controversy: the left will always work with bourgeois capitalism against the land and the culture rooted in the land, because both of these political movements have a vital stake in a depersonalized West.

My critics have accused me of romanticism and of nostalgia for the Middle Ages. Let me assure them all, as well as the editors of The Commonweal, that the program we conservatives propose is more radical in scope than anything put forth thus far under the liberal banner. We will work within this social structure not in order to make it more habitable, but in order that we might destroy what we conceive to be little better than a prison. What we place before ourselves demands not only a complete dedication, but also a profound penetration into the spirit of the age, so that it might be understood at the source of its disease: its very mind.

Lying at the core of that mind the conservative finds what Eric Voegelin has called the "gnostic principle," and what I have characterized as "the theology of eschatology," the "drive to the Other." Modern man cannot be sanctified, nor can his age be incarnated by the Christian leaven, because modern man will permit no incarnation. The industrial mind detests present existence, and its whole psychological apparatus is aimed only at the future. You cannot sanctify an empty abstraction. The sacramental conception of the universe—so dear to the liturgy and exemplified everywhere in the older Christendom—is foreign to the modern spirit because being has become for that spirit, as Gabriel Marcel has so well said, nothing but a being-used.

Do not speak to mass-man in terms of things that exist in and for themselves. He will hate you if you do. This is an age of total work in which reality can be seen only instrumentally; it is an age forever carried forward by a tissue of myths, existing in the collective psyche, that keep in slavery the dehumanized millions camping out on a technologized desert, looking always for the promised Jerusalem, never seeing that which is.

Therefore the Catholic traditionalist places before the integral Catholic mind the following program: a political legitimacy that symbolizes, not mere partisan politics, but the unique history and spirit and traditions of a whole people—a legitimacy, rooted not only in the urban forum, but in the land as well; the introduction of the ascetical principle (proposed by the Swiss economist Wilhelm Ropke) into machine production; the rebuilding of the family farm and of the culture that issues therefrom; the eventual destruction of those large units of production whose work could be carried forward by the family or by the individual; the communion, once again, of man with being as it is; the sanctification of present existence; the exorcism of the myth of the future; piety for the dead; the sacramental universe that will nourish in the soul a reverence for being, a tenderness and wonder before the impossible things that are.

Finally, permit me to say to my critics that although the conservative sees history not as a dialectic nor as a law, but as a corporate and immemorial tradition imbuing life into a man formed in that tradition—nonetheless, the conservative's reaction against the modern

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world is more metaphysical than historical. Behind all rational discourse and underlying every argumentation there lies some original vision of things, only half-articulated in daily life by the man who draws conviction and hope from this primitive source within him. And behind the traditionalist's objection to the modern world there too lies such a vision: the vision of the profound dreariness and anonymity of a universe in which, not only the human person, but all existence is reduced to the slavery of use. Gentlemen, the conservative is reacting against the total prostitution of creation.

FREDERICK D. WILHELMSEN.

Mr. Wilhelmsen's original article, "The Conservative Catholic" [The Commonweal, Feb. 20, 1953] has brought an unusually wide response from our readers. This seems to us an encouraging indication of interest among American Catholics in defining the situation of the Church in the modern world, and we therefore regret that space limitations require us to close this phase of the controversy with the publication of Mr. Wilhelmsen's present answer to his critics—among whom we continue to number ourselves.

THE EDITORS.

OF NOTE

THE EASTER VIGIL

FATHER Josef Loew, C.SS.R., Vice-Relator of the Historical Section of the Sacred Congregation of Rites at the Vatican, writes in the March *Worship* (Collegeville, Minn.) about the new Easter-vigil observance. Excerpts from his article follow:

> Why, precisely, must we celebrate the Easter-night? Because it used to be custom? No, not for that reason. At least not in the first place. We must celebrate the Easter-night above all *out of a lively sense of pastoral responsibility*. . . . The Church exists for souls! That means, Masses in the evening. That means, the great ceremonies of the Easter Vigil, which for centuries have been observed in the morning, must be transferred again to the evening, to the time of night when the people can take part.
>
> Of course one can expect all sorts of objections against this "innovation." Anything new is resented by the creature of habit called man. It is due to sloth of spirit, or often just a love of ease. As a matter of fact, there is no question in this case of any "innovation," but, more exactly, only of a *restoration* of the ancient, original state of things. The Church for centuries was concerned to celebrate precisely the "Easter-night"—the great, glorious "full vigil," the *"Pannychis,"* the solemn nightwatch—in order that Christ might not find his Bride sleeping. . . .
>
> We must celebrate the Easter-night because we want to restore *full significance to Easter* itself, the greatest feast of Christendom. Curiously enough, many fear, and feared, that the night celebration of the Easter Vigil would harm the solemn celebration of Easter day. The opposite has happened. It is clear beyond a doubt from the official reports of bishops as well as from the many articles and other accounts that have reached us, that wherever the Easter nightwatch was celebrated, attendance at the main service on Easter Sunday did not suffer, but was in most cases increased.
>
> And that was really to be expected. For the proper celebration of the Easter-night, accompanied by a sound introduction of the faithful into the meaning of the whole Easter mystery, will awaken in them a better understanding of the true greatness, beauty and significance of Easter Sunday. Hence they will feel impelled to come to Mass again on Easter day. No, *the celebration of the new Easter Vigil does not detract from the celebration of Easter Sunday*. On the contrary: if the Vigil has been well prepared, if the faithful have been well instructed, if they have grasped the meaning of the Easter mystery in its entirety, Easter Sunday will not suffer.
>
> Here too the basic principle of pastoral liturgy applies: *one* feast *elucidates the other; one* well-celebrated liturgical solemnity *furthers all others*. For the liturgy in its totality, the Church year in its succession of celebrations, constitutes an organically interrelated whole. Consequently, even if only one part is brought to life, it will exercise a vivifying influence also on the parts that precede and follow it.
>
> It was therefore a decision of the highest moment when the Holy Father determined to apply the lever of official liturgical restoration to the very center of all liturgical celebration, Easter.
>
> If pastors succeed in bringing the feast of *Easter* to life again *in its totality*—and this would include the Easter nightwatch, and even the preceding days of Holy Week (for passion, death and resurrection belong essentially together); if they succeed in making it come truly and spiritually alive again among the Christian people, and in making it meaningful for Christian living, then there will and must stream forth from this central point, necessarily and infallibly, new operations of grace upon all the rest of the Church year, upon the whole life of the faithful. For the liturgy is, essentially, a sharing in the grace-operations of the Redemption. . . .

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The Dissection of Babbitt Junior

WILL HERBERG

PETER Viereck's pursuit has long been that "conservative revolution" about which he wrote in *Conservatism Revisited*. It is Mr. Viereck's basic contention that the progressivism in politics and avant-gardeism in aesthetics which once represented fresh insights and some degree at least of genuine creativity have now become mere ritual gestures, the stereotyped expressions of a convention of "unconventionality," in short, the neo-babbittry of Babbitt Junior. This kind of "modernist" philistinism is not merely shoddy pretence, Mr. Viereck emphasizes; it becomes positively sinister because it falls in with the catastrophic pattern of Western history, particularly after 1870—the collapse of universal values and the emergence of the "blood and iron" nationalism of Bismarck and the "blood and iron" socialism of Marx, both of which have entered in varying degrees into the fashioning of modern totalitarianism.

This thesis is given its full expression in Mr. Viereck's new book, *The Shame and Glory of the Intellectuals* [Beacon, $4]. It is a most difficult book to review; really to do justice to it one would have to reprint it entire. It includes some eighty essays, mostly quite brief, grouped into ten chapters, but dealing with the widest variety of subjects in the most varied manner and approach. The book is admittedly a compilation, a grab-bag; yet for all that it reveals a unity of content and a rightness of style many another, more obviously planned, volume might envy. And throughout there is not a wasted word or trite phrase. For Mr. Viereck is a poet and critic doubling as historian and social philosopher. He is therefore able to combine a scholarly control of his material and a scrupulous documentation with a really original insight and a gift of fresh, if sometimes forced, expression. The combination is most effective.

But though the essays are on many subjects, the book has its unity of theme, in some sense evident throughout but explicitly stated by Mr. Viereck towards the end of the volume:

> Though diverse subjects have been treated in these pages [he says], their unity is basic because it reflects two underlying themes. The one unifying theme has been negative, the other positive. Negative theme: to examine the ethical, artistic, and political dangers of the new philistinism. Positive: a humanistic conservatism to meet the danger in these three fields. At its best, the new conservatism may be described as the rediscovery of values.

AS Mr. Viereck sees it, the "advanced" intellectual of our time, alienated from a world which he understands as little as it understands him, and expressing his alienation in the outdated stereotypes of an earlier age, often becomes both victim and agent of the demonic forces which are today threatening freedom, culture, and the very existence of mankind.

"Alger Hiss and Ezra Pound are the two ghosts at the feast of Babbitt Junior. . . . The Hiss case is the bad conscience of all America's *demi-vierges.*" Mr. Viereck is merciless in flaying the *trahison des clercs* of which the "fellow-traveling" intellectual has been guilty; he makes it crystal clear that support of Communism is no trifling escapade excusable in terms of intellectual curiosity or misplaced idealism. "Communism," he states in the plainest possible manner, "is not primarily a program of ideas nor a parliamentary discussion. Communist party membership is *an act,* a military deed . . . . Membership in the Communist party is morally an act comparable to murder. Mass-murder in fact. Morally, every Communist or Nazi party member, if he has joined the party voluntarily, is up to his elbows in the blood of his party's victims"—and that of course applies to the Nazi or Communist apologist as well.

But to this stark realism and intense moral earnestness, Mr. Viereck adds a compassion and understanding that never permit him to lose his human sympathy or give up the Communist (and Nazi too for that matter) as irredeemably lost. "Toward Hiss and Pound personally, the only decent reaction is not vindictiveness but compassionate human sympathy": this is said, remember, by a man who regards Communism and Nazism as a "military deed, an act comparable to mass-murder." Because he understands what it means to hate the sin and yet love the sinner, Mr. Viereck can say quite simply: "Past guilt need not hang like an albatross around the present. . . . But the only way to slough off past mistakes is to admit them. The only way to regain your inner freedom from guilt is to recognize it." Not only for Babbitt Junior but even for Alger Hiss the way is always open to repentance and return.

Mr. Herberg is a frequent contributor to Commentary magazine and the author of "Judaism and Modern Man."

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The "revolution in values," which dissolved the "ethical restraints governing the means society used to reach its end," led to the transformation of "liberal nationalism into fascist nationalism and democratic or utopian socialism into bolshevik socialism" and thus precipitated the world into its present catastrophic situation. Mr. Viereck now calls for a reversal of this nihilistic revolution; he calls for a return to the "universal moral values" derived from our "Christian-Judaic-Hellenic" tradition, a tradition which stresses the dignity of the human person and the existence of a "higher law" transcending all earthly powers and majesties.

This "rediscovery of values," he suggests, may best be achieved by a "new conservatism," concerned with conserving "not real-estate but real values." This new conservatism, he thinks, implies a return to classicism in aesthetics and to the high-minded, responsible "Tory socialism" of Disraeli and Winston Churchill (Mr. Viereck's particular hero) in politics and social affairs. Modern liberalism, he finds, has become too mechanical, too doctrinaire, too statist, too easily prone to lapse into neo-babbittry, while social-democracy is enfeebled and distracted by an "inherent inner conflict" between its philosophy of economic collectivism and its commitment to freedom and individual rights.

The new conservatism, whose historical background Mr. Viereck described in his earlier *Conservatism Revisited,* he now urges eloquently in terms of the needs of our time. It is conservatism that will really conserve—conserve the threatened values of our culture, the economic achievements of capitalism, the social gains of liberalism, the continuity and organic character of our society and civilization. It is this kind of conservatism, he is convinced, not the played-out progressivism of the New Deal or the Old Guard pseudo-conservatism he somewhat unfairly associates with the name of Senator Taft, which can have an appeal to the imaginative and generous-minded youth of our time and move them to a sense of dedication and commitment which (according to Mr. Viereck) they so sadly lack. The entire book is thus a proclamation of the gospel of the new conservatism.

I would not wish to object too strenuously to anything Mr. Viereck says; I am too deeply impressed with his insight and understanding and too grateful for his passionate moral earnestness to want to quarrel with him. Nevertheless, there are a number of points where I feel I must register some question or dissent.

I cannot say that I am quite clear as to the real meaning Mr. Viereck attaches to his key concepts "conservative" and "liberal" (or "progressive"). Sometimes the distinction seems to be one between classicism and romanticism; sometimes between the organic and the mechanistic conceptions of society and the state; sometimes between a Burkean realism as to the nature of man in politics and a Rousseauistic "optimism" about human rationality and goodness; sometimes again between pragmatic, piecemeal social reform, with a deep reliance on the efficacy of voluntary cooperation, and doctrinaire, statist regimentation. These are by no means identical or equivalent distinctions. Virtually all our American Founding Fathers, Jefferson hardly less than Madison or Hamilton, were Burkean realists, but Burke himself was hardly a genuine classicist in aesthetics (is Mr. Viereck?), nor have classicists in culture generally been adherents of the organic view of society.

Mr. Viereck himself is troubled by his terminology, for he is forced to raise the question whether "any universally valid definition of conservatism [is] possible." In Mr. Viereck's usage, a certain kind of liberalism, say the liberalism of Lord Acton or even, in a very different way, of John Dewey (his political and social views, not his philosophy), would be virtually indistinguishable from the "value-conserving" conservatism he urges. Would it not be better to devise new terms than to employ old ones so equivocal?

There is some difficulty too, I think, in Mr. Viereck's account of the provenance of the "universal moral values" with which he is so much concerned. He constantly speaks of the "Christian-Judaic-Hellenic" ethic or heritage or tradition. But is it possible to regard the three as equally significant ingredients in our moral heritage? More specifically, is it possible to regard Greek ethics as in any sense congruent with the Biblical ethic of Judaism and Christianity? I do not think so. "Greek rationalism," the historian Hajo Holborn has pointed out, "had no organ for the free individual. The idea of the right of the individual to possess a sphere of his own was alien to the Greeks. The government was in total control of the community, and whatever freedom the individual might acquire he could gain only through participation in government. The Greek soul did not demand a field in life to itself and beyond the social order."

Here, I think, Mr. Viereck is misled by his tendency to identify the kind of thing he wants in ethics and politics with classicism in aesthetics. There is no such equivalence: the Greek idea is (presumably) classical; Jewish-Christian spirituality is anything but. We derive a great deal from the "glory that was Greece," and we ought to be properly grateful for it. But it is not to Athens that we owe the ethic that enables us to affirm the rights of the person and to acknowledge a higher law and a higher allegiance beyond state and society and culture; it is to Jerusalem that we owe it. Mr. Viereck's attempt to yoke the Hellenic with the Jewish-Christian in a kind of Western moral *troika* cannot pass muster.

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More basically even, I have qualifications and doubts as to the role Mr. Viereck assigns to "values." He speaks of "universal moral values," and in this age of moral chaos, we certainly appreciate what he means. But what is the status of these values? Are they absolute? No, Mr. Viereck says: "nothing mortal is absolutely absolute"—and he is surely right. "[Universal moral values] are those . . . values transcending national, class, and individual differences, which are relatively absolute." But recognizing these values to be only *"relatively* absolute" raises the question of what is "*absolutely* absolute," for, as Mr. Viereck well knows, the relative can retain its relative validity only if it is grounded in something beyond itself which is indeed absolute. What shall that be? What is it that man shall make the object of his supreme loyalty and devotion, in other words, his god?

The alternative confronting us is startlingly simple: "Man must worship something; if he does not worship God, he will worship an idol made of wood or of gold or of ideas"—and, one may add, of ideals and values. Once the profound truth of these words of Dostoevsky is realized, the question of the rootage of the "universal values" Mr. Viereck champions assumes an importance it does not possess in this book. Mr. Viereck concedes the significance of the issue as to whether the "universal values" are religiously or naturalistically grounded, but he insists that the important thing is to stress the universal ethic on which we are agreed rather than the matter of its origin or sanction, on which we differ.

Of course, Mr. Viereck is right in insisting on the necessity of the cooperation of men of good will regardless of their theology or metaphysics. But I do not think he sees clearly enough that unless one's ethic or value system is grounded in a reality beyond, it will itself become absolute, a "mortal god," an idol of demonic power. In other words, we want to keep even our most universal values under judgment and control and we can do this only in terms of a transcendent allegiance to a majesty beyond all earthly majesties, beyond even the majesty of the moral law.

* * *

Mr. Viereck notes in his preface the comment of a colleague of his upon reading the manuscript of this book: "A slap in the face of ninety percent of your kind of readers; all will agree with some of it—none will stomach much of it." The present writer himself happens to agree with most of it, but quite apart from that, he can assure other readers that whether they can "stomach" much of it or not, they will think about and react to every sentence in these pages.

A Man for the Future Who Looked to the Past

ESSAYS ON CHURCH AND STATE. By Lord Acton. Edited by Douglas Woodruff. Viking. $6.

ACTON'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: An Analysis. By G. E. Fasnacht. Viking. $4.

By EDWARD LITTLEJOHN

"I never had any contemporaries," Lord Acton once said. The problems that interested him along the wavy line between religion and politics were not the preoccupation of his day. They are, however, as Mr. Woodruff points out in his introduction to the *Essays on Church and State,* questions which bitter experience has forced our age to consider. It was the sixteenth century which interested Acton the most. That century with its violence and all-embracing religions has its similarities with our own century of violence and all-embracing politics.

Though Lord Acton's standards of scholarship were severe, he was no cloistered student. For he sought continually to bring the fruit of research to policy in Church and State. He began this mission in his early twenties, just less than a century ago. After some eight years of study in Germany he returned to England as a journalist determined to open up the new world of knowledge in science, history and philosophy to the Catholic community. His hopes were not fulfilled, but a later generation is reaping the harvest of his mind.

In an early issue of his magazine, the *Rambler,* Acton stated his case: Catholic literature of the day, he claimed, is neither serious nor durable. Indeed, taken by itself, it is positively injurious, promoting a superficial self-content. "It nourishes the delusion that we have only to communicate truths, not to discover them." Catholics are only too likely, he argued, to run blindly to extremes, so eager and hasty in rebuking criticism that they rashly expose themselves to more difficult rejoinders. Confident that there is nothing to add to the intellectual achievements of the past, churchmen often despise or are indifferent to new ideas.

Yet, an opponent must be met on his own ground. Human learning has been not understood as a source of religious truth but rather used as a weapon of hostility against faith. For, if intellectual freedom and knowledge are not used *by* Catholics, they will be used *against* them. Ill-informed criticism can best be met not by prejudiced rebuke but by patient and informed argument. "Authority," Acton wrote with finality, "can only condemn error; its vitality is not destroyed until it is refuted."

To the leaders of a newly-emancipated church, these categorical pronouncements seemed to be an incitement to disunity, when the

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times demanded steady and disciplined loyalty. Faced with growing official opposition, the *Rambler* had to cease publication. Its successor, the *Home and Foreign Review,* was different only in name, and soon Cardinal Wiseman in a public discourse declared it to be an organ of "dangerous leadership." Recognizing this as a paralyzing setback, Acton again pleaded eloquently for his principles.

The political and intellectual orders, he wrote, are distinct from the spiritual. By following their own ends and laws, they discover truth, uphold the right, and so support the cause of religion. No principle can succumb to a vested interest. Moved by the greatness of the work they have to do, zealous and ardent Catholic writers have often been "careless in statement, rhetorical and illogical in argument, too positive to be critical and too confident to be precise." Though their services have been great, their arguments have been tainted with partisanship. Indeed, their arguments in defense have sometimes been no nearer the truth than the criticisms of the enemies of the Church.

Catholics will not advance their cause by sacrificing principle to interest or party, Acton warned. "A political law or a scientific truth may be perilous to the morals or the faith of individuals, but it cannot on this ground be resisted by the Church." Freedom of conscience may be a temptation to apostasy; a scientific discovery may shake the faith of thousands; yet it may not be refuted. False religions will judge these things by the touchstone of interest; a true religion will appraise them by the standard of truth.

To the study of history, Acton brought the same fervent assurance with which he fought these contemporary battles in church and state. A philosophy of politics to Acton was also a theology, as Mr. Fasnacht points out. The abiding issues in his history are ethical and moral. Mind takes precedence over matter, ideas over force in the ascending life of man and that ascent must be judged above all by the spread of liberty—representation, the extinction of slavery, the reign of opinion, freedom of conscience and the security of minorities upon which all else depends.

Acton's life coincides almost to the year with the Victorian Age. He did not, however, share the confident optimism of that expanding era. Though a liberal, he did not overlook the unpleasant facts of human sin and corruption. So while the general liberal creed has proved increasingly inadequate to sterner times, Acton's thought has grown in relevance. As Miss Himmelfarb has put it in her recent biography of Acton: "It appears that we are privileged to see and understand him as his contemporaries never did. He is of this age, more than of his. He is, indeed, one of our great contemporaries." Or Mr. Fasnacht in his present study: "Acton had reached in thought the problems with which we are now faced in experience."

With extraordinary insight Acton saw that the threat to liberty comes not only from tyrants. "It is bad to be oppressed by a minority, but it is worse to be oppressed by a major-

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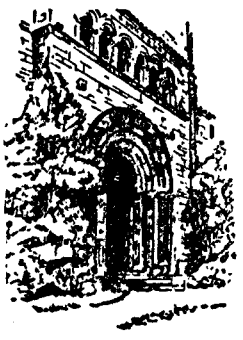

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ity. For there is a reserve of latent power in the masses which, if it is called into play, the minority can seldom resist. But from the absolute will of an entire people there is no appeal, no redemption, no refuge but treason."

It was clear enough that checks were required against the authority of monarchs and aristocrats. But a democracy too can oppress. The Estates General of 1789 strove notably and failed to bring in the brave new world. They put the nation in place of the crown, but they invested it with the same unlicensed power, with no security or remedy against oppression. Even the representatives of the people may not be trusted, for men elected to serve the people can claim the right to judge them.

Socialism, Lord Acton noted, was sanctioned by religion and has been strong wherever there is intense religious zeal. But, he concluded, it is the worst enemy of freedom, and only to be realized at the cost of tremendous despotism. That theory which sweeps away every authority except that of the state, and makes it irresistible by multiplying those who share it, is the enemy of common freedom.

Despite the renewed interest in Acton, he will never be popular. For his thought is not to be found in any single or even a few works. Rather it must be pieced together laboriously from essays, lectures, book notices, letters, and from notes not intended for publication. Indeed, as Mr. Fasnacht points out, Acton never said in one place all that he thought about a subject. Moreover, his published works are so packed with meaning that they are virtually inexhaustible. Hence the commentator on Acton must confess that only the research of a lifetime would be sufficient for the appraisal of some of his judgments. The fact is, Mr. Fasnacht concludes, no one has ever mastered the whole evidence. Acton wrote of Burke that systems have been built up on the fragments that fell from his table. He wrote of Leibniz that the harvest could never be completely gathered from the fertility of his genius. Both judgments could be applied to Lord Acton himself.

Children of the Depression

THE HEART ALONE. By George Howe. Putnam. $3.50.

By JEAN HOLZHAUER

HERE is another of those pleasant, sprawling novels about a dozen or so nice people inhabiting the Eastern seaboard from World War I until, and into, the depression. There is a growing family of such volumes, its members differing only in the degree of technical excellence displayed.

If we put J. P. Marquand at the head of the scale of technical excellence, George Howe, in this book, is middling. He offers a wealth of descriptive detail: slang, fashions, architecture, automobile designs, and drinking habits, patiently reproduced. This almost succeeds in effecting verisimilitude.

It completely succeeds in burying characters, plot, and interest. No individual emerges except he is pallid from interment, and the dialogue tends to the line of "Why not add a single garage instead of a double, and put the saving into plaster?"

Books like this really do not deserve the title of novel, if by novel we mean an art form. The materials are all there, but we are embedded in them. It is a case of no transcendence, all the way down the line.

If, after all this, anyone cares, the story concerns two cousins, Amy Everett and Easter Green, who fall in love as children with the boy next door and vie gently with each other for his favor until they are old enough to know better, and well beyond. They stop when Amy, who has become Dickie's wife, dies while bearing Dickie's son. After this of course Dickie marries Easter, who apparently doesn't mind at all.

The flavor of the book is pretty

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well summarized in the closing lines:

" 'Did you say love was as strong as death? It's stronger.'

"She pinched his ear.

" 'You can write me about it sometime.'

" 'All right, I will. Some time when there's nothing better to do.' "

The Scientific Age

MODERN SCIENCE AND MODERN MAN. By James B. Conant. Columbia University Press. $2.25.

By KARL STERN

WHILE sociologists attempt to find methods comparable to the methods of the natural sciences, the scientists proper, such as the author of this book, become increasingly concerned with problems of the human society. This is not surprising. Science becomes every day more intimately associated with technology, and technology has an immediate impact on society. The present book presents the four Bampton lectures given by Professor Conant at Columbia University in 1952. In an excellent introductory lecture he points out the paradoxical (and in the long run dangerous) fact that scientific progress is being achieved behind curtains of secrecy. Science is not based on empiricism but on theories, and theories are evolved only by free, unimpeded discussion.

From there the author goes on to define the position of science in today's society and in the world of human values. He feels that "in order to assimilate science into the culture of our twentieth century highly industrialized society, we must regard scientific theories as guides to human action, and thus an extension of common sense." While on previous occasions Conant has been skeptical as to the application of scientific methods to the field of human values, he is now apparently much more ready to go a long way in this direction. "Which one of the common-sense fuzzy ideas about consciousness, love or the zest for power will be picked up by a rare genius and be the basis for a vast expansion of fruitful scientific work? Perhaps some of you will say that I am unduly cautious. . . ."

In fact, Conant *is* cautious. Throughout the book he argues against those who still hold the naive nineteenth century creed of unlimited human progress brought about exclusively through science. In fact he points out, quite correctly, that this creed is represented complete and without any compromise only in one form—in dialectic materialism. And there it is led *ad absurdum*.

On the other hand, he cannot accept a clearly defined religious belief either. Like so many writers of a liberal and subjective religious outlook he navigates between those two end points of dialectic materialist orthodoxy on one hand and Christian orthodoxy on the other. And like so many writers of this kind he implies (although this is never expressed in so many words) that both these "orthodoxies" belong together to the past while the thinker who is spiritual in his aim but "free" in his premises belongs to the future.

It is, therefore, not surprising to see that there is a lot of precarious fence-sitting going on (particularly in the last chapter "Science and Spiritual Values"). Conant's concluding remarks are not addressed to "those whose theology is so certain as to be comparable with a belief in the reality of an external world. Nor will they be addressed to those whose picture of the universe leaves no room for spiritual values." Representatives from either of these camps will not find it difficult to detect some of the serious inner contradictions in which the author gets involved. On the other hand those who think of the positivist certainty of nearly all our scientists in the beginning of this century cannot help but feel encouraged by the general trend of this book.

Two Roads Diverged

DENHAM PROPER. By Alfred Slote. Putnam. $3.50.

By PHILIP J. SCHARPER

THIS is a first novel; it is also, one must regretfully add, a premature one. Mr. Slote tells the story of Robert Denham Manning, the current scion of an old Westchester County family, who finds himself questioning in middle life the decision he had made as a young man to give up his hopes of becoming a novelist, and also to give up Maida, the rebellious Polish girl of poor family he had fallen in love with when both were attending the University of Michigan.

The decision then had been largely his mother's; she, not Manning, was convinced of the necessity of living within the pattern of one's family. But when he is forced, by the various circumstances of the novel, to look back on roads not taken—to see if he has really married the right girl, taken the right job—he eventually concludes that he has done both. "Ripeness is all" —in a sense that would be well understood by Manning's fellow commuters from the village of Denham on the 8:05.

Mr. Slote has chosen the flashback technique to tell this story of a man's coming to accept life for what it is, instead of pining for what it might have been; unfortunately, in his hands, it becomes a rather clumsy and obvious device which is so mechanically employed that it juxtaposes, rather than fuses, the past and the present.

A similar baldness and immaturity limit the effectiveness of the author's character portrayals; the major figures of the novel are one-dimensional, and even within their narrowly conceived frame are imperfectly realized; their sketchiness suggests a close study of Marquand and M-G-M, rather than a patient observation of human nature. Mr. Slote is at his best in dealing with his minor characters—Manning's teen-age daughters, a Communist recruiter doubling as an English instructor at Michigan, an aggressive-

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ly young cadet encountered when Manning revisits his old military prep school. It is only here that the dialogue works inward to reveal character, and outward to further story; in the mouths of the major characters the dialogue constantly snaps under the weight of the author's naivete.

There are several rewards, however, for the patient reader; Mr. Slote has scattered moments of insight; he has, refreshingly enough in a decade of bumptious first novels, a lack of pretension and an engaging simplicity; he is capable of real compassion toward his characters (a rare quality for a novelist of any age); and, lastly, he shows on occasion an ability at narrative that brings all of these other qualities into effective focus. It is the promise, rather than the achievement, of *Denham Proper* that makes one look forward to his next novel.

TEACHING THE CHRISTIAN VIRTUES. By William H. Russell. Bruce. $2.75.

THIS volume represents a Christocentric, rather than a Thomistic philosophical-theological approach to ethics. The emphasis is on Christ as a Person to be known and loved, on Christ as a Model—as distinct from a Christianized version of Aristotelian ethical ideals. Or, as Msgr. Russell expresses his basic conviction on the path to be followed: "In Christ, Christianity is not studied in theory nor as abstract truth nor as an abstract virtue, but as a living reality. In this way integration can be brought into the life of the student, and he deepens virtue by living with Christ in His various acts. The act of believing, of worshipping, of living virtuously becomes one and the same. 'I am the way, and the truth and the life.' "

REVIEWERS

Edward Littlejohn, former Australian Vice-Consul in New York, now lives in Detroit.

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Philip J. Scharper is a member of the Department of English at Fordham.

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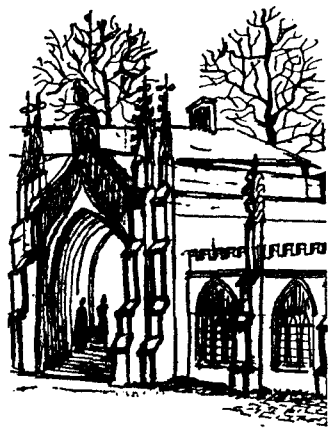

In next week's annual Education Issue, George N. Shuster discusses the highly controverted question of Academic Freedom—particularly as it relates to current demands for government investigation of colleges and universities in order to uncover and remove subversive influences.

". . . Academic freedom will endure only as long as those who profess to have a right to it stand ready to pay for it any price which may be exacted. The scholar, the teacher, is one in whom this freedom is incarnate; and as soon as he indicates that he wishes it were not so, or that he would like to go hide under a convenient bushel, there will no longer be a good reason why others should defend the heritage for him.

"To be sure, silence and a measure of feigned conformity will be necessary under tyranny. Honest men may have to eat the bitter bread of exile. But compromise with evil they dare not. If in a nation like ours there should exist widespread fear of criticism, and much supine acceptance of gags, it might well indicate that many had fallen so deeply in love with security that their sovereign interest was no longer conscience but conformity."

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